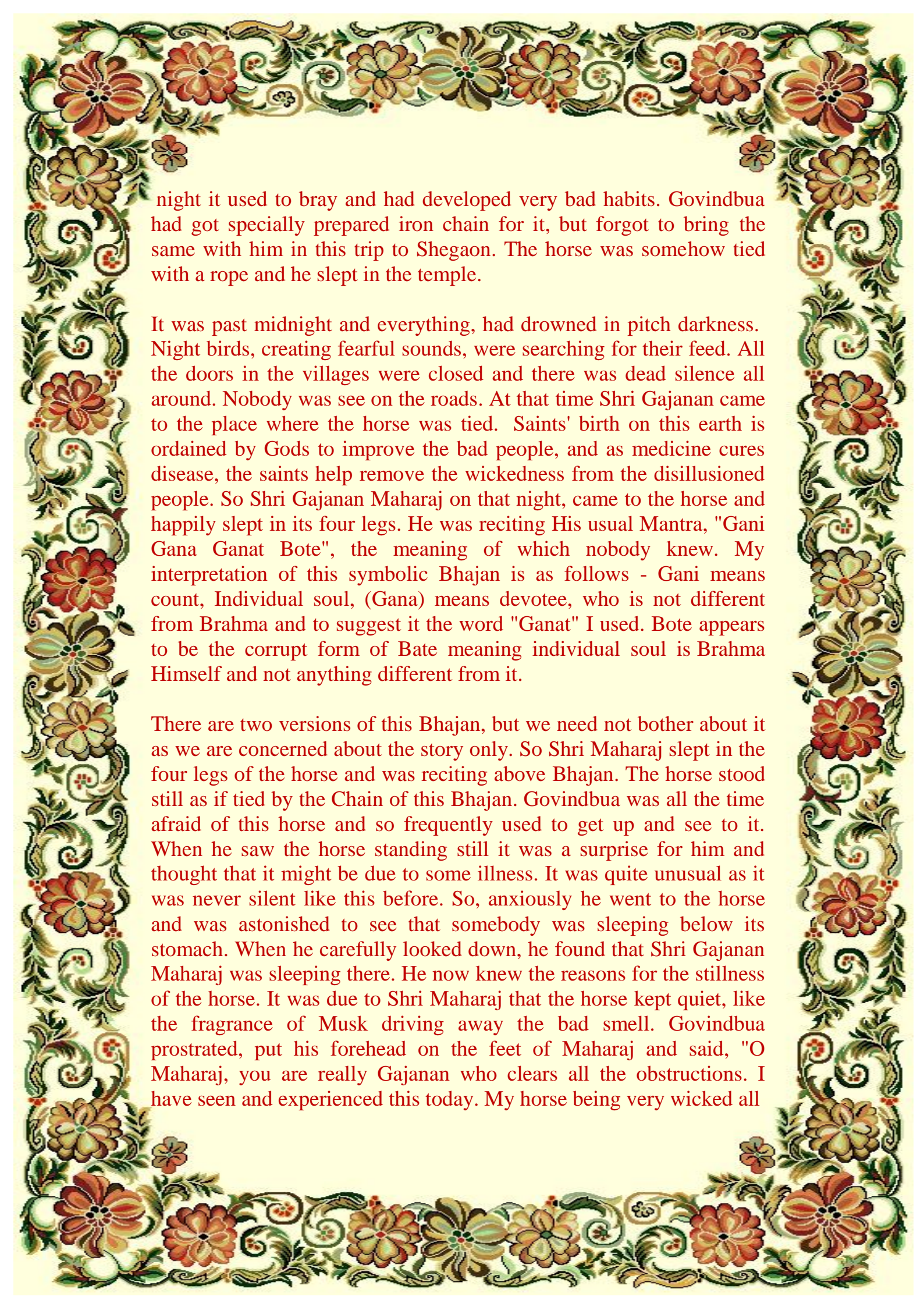


* CHAPTER NINE *



Shri Ganeshay Namaha ! O Rukmini's consort, O you, who lives on the bank of Chandrabhaga, adores flute and blesses saints, you are the savior of the fallen and giver of blessings. Greatness of the great cannot exist without the presence of small ones, and God cannot get his importance without the existence to sinners. O God ! please remember that because of we, the sinners, you are called the savior. "Paras" has the importance because its touch turns iron into gold. Godavari is called holy river because it receives into it water from all small brooks. Oh, Madhava over think this and give a helping hand to this Dasganu, to save him from drowning.


One "Kirtankar" named Govindbua Taklikar once came to Shegaon to perform kirtan. There was an ancient temple of God Shiva at Shegaon and it was renovated by a rich man named Mote. Now-a-days rich people are not found of temples, and instead they like motors, cars and cycles. Mote Saokar was not that type. Though rich, he was a believer in God, and that was why got the temple renovated. So the temple was called Mote's temple. Now listen to the story. Govindbua Taklikar, camped in the above mentioned Mote's temple and he tied his horse in front of the main door. The horse had very bad habits like kiking anybody coming near it, and of biting. It frequently snapped the ropes, never stayed steady and at times used to run away in jungles. Day and



night it used to bray and had developed very bad habits. Govindbua had got specially prepared iron chain for it, but forgot to bring the same with him in this trip to Shegaon. The horse was somehow tied with a rope and he slept in the temple.

It was past midnight and everything, had drowned in pitch darkness. Night birds, creating fearful sounds, were searching for their feed. All the doors in the villages were closed and there was dead silence all around. Nobody was see on the roads. At that time Shri Gajanan came to the place where the horse was tied. Saints' birth on this earth is ordained by Gods to improve the bad people, and as medicine cures disease, the saints help remove the wickedness from the disillusioned people. So Shri Gajanan Maharaj on that night, came to the horse and happily slept in its four legs. He was reciting His usual Mantra, "Gani Gana Ganat Bote", the meaning of which nobody knew. My interpretation of this symbolic Bhajan is as follows - Gani means count, Individual soul, (Gana) means devotee, who is not different from Brahma and to suggest it the word "Ganat" I used. Bote appears to be the corrupt form of Bate meaning individual soul is Brahma Himself and not anything different from it.


There are two versions of this Bhajan, but we need not bother about it as we are concerned about the story only. So Shri Maharaj slept in the four legs of the horse and was reciting above Bhajan. The horse stood still as if tied by the Chain of this Bhajan. Govindbua was all the time afraid of this horse and so frequently used to get up and see to it. When he saw the horse standing still it was a surprise for him and thought that it might be due to some illness. It was quite unusual as it was never silent like this before. So, anxiously he went to the horse and was astonished to see that somebody was sleeping below its stomach. When he carefully looked down, he found that Shri Gajanan Maharaj was sleeping there. He now knew the reasons for the stillness of the horse. It was due to Shri Maharaj that the horse kept quiet, like the fragrance of Musk driving away the bad smell. Govindbua prostrated, put his forehead on the feet of Maharaj and said, "O Maharaj, you are really Gajanan who clears all the obstructions. I have seen and experienced this today. My horse being very wicked all



are afraid to it, and so you have come to do away its wickedness. It has got very bad habit like suddenly jumping and kicking while walking. I was fed up with it and had offered to sell, but nobody would purchase it, not even free. It is good that you have obliged me by calming down this animal. Horse of a preacher like me should be a gentle one. Tiger is harmful in the house of a cowherd." Thus the horse suddenly became gentle and thereby Shri Maharaj manifested His power to save even the animal life from going to bad path. Then He said to the Horse, "O ! friend, don't be naughty hereafter and leave all your bad habits here only Remember that you are standing here before Shiva and so should behave like a bull. Do not trouble anybody henceforth." Saying so, Shri Gajanan, who controlled the behavior of an animal, went away.

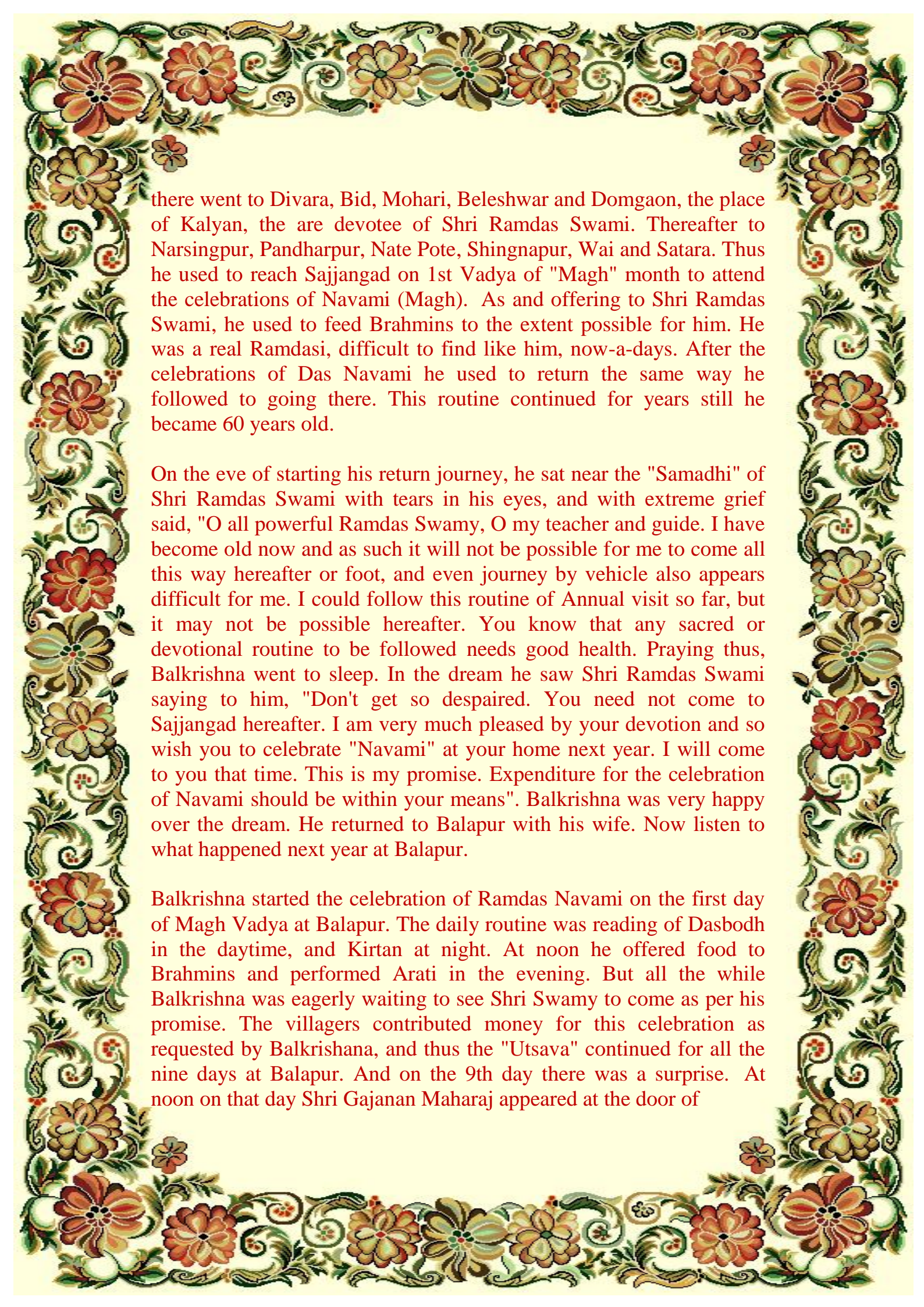
Next day, while Shri Maharaj was in the garden, Govindbua came there riding his horse. All people of Shegaon knew very well this horse of Govindbua and were afraid of it. When they saw it coming one of them said, "Govindbua, why have you brought this trouble with you ? This horse will harm the ladies and children here." Thereupon Govindbua said that Shri Maharaj had made him sober last night and it had abandoned all its bad habits. Nobody should be afraid of it anymore. The horse was left free under a tree and it stood there for an hour without any rope or chain. There was lot of vegetables & grass around but the horse did not touch it at all. See how powerful are the saints, who could control even an animal and change its habits In praise of Maharaj, Govindbua chanted as follows, "Nobody in the world is able to understand your actions. Your Blessings can bring-round any villain. Please place your hand on my head as my benefactor." so praising Him, Govindbua left for Takli on his horse.

Every day people used to come to Shegaon with intentions to get fulfillment of some desire or the other. Among them were two persons from Balapur, who, on their way, vowed to offer "Ganjya" to Shri Maharaj next time, to get their wish fulfilled. They believed that Shri Maharaj liked Ganjya more than sweets. Next time they came to Shegaon but had forgotten to bring Ganjya. They felt shy and vowed to bring twice the quantity next time. Next time, they again forgot to



bring it. Seeing them Shri Maharaj said to Bhaskar, "Look, the way people behave. They vow to do something and forget it. They are Brahmans by caste and do not know that Brahmans should behave as they preach. That is why this caste has lost its superiority. When they vow something and forget, how can they expect to get their desires fulfilled ? Bhaskara, one should adhere to what he speaks or vows, to get the blessings of God." These words hurt them very much and they looked at each other in surprise to see that Maharaj knew everything that was in their mind. When they saw that Shri Maharaj knew everything about their vow and subsequent failing to fulfill it, they got up to go to market & bring the Ganjya immediately. Thereupon Shri Maharaj said, "Why are you now crying over the spilt milk ? I have no craze for Ganjya, so don't go to market now. Only remember that one should keep up his vows and promises to deserve the God's blessings, as liars don't get them. Now you go, and bring Ganjya only on fulfillment of your desire. It will be fulfilled next week. But remember to come here five times for the Darshan of Shri Shiva, by whose blessings Kubera became rich. Go, prostrate before Him and do not forget to bring Ganjya next time. One should not violate the vows to God and saints." They accordingly bowed Lord Shiva and returned to Balapur. Next week they, after fulfillment of the wish, came to Shegaon to offer Ganjya as per vow.

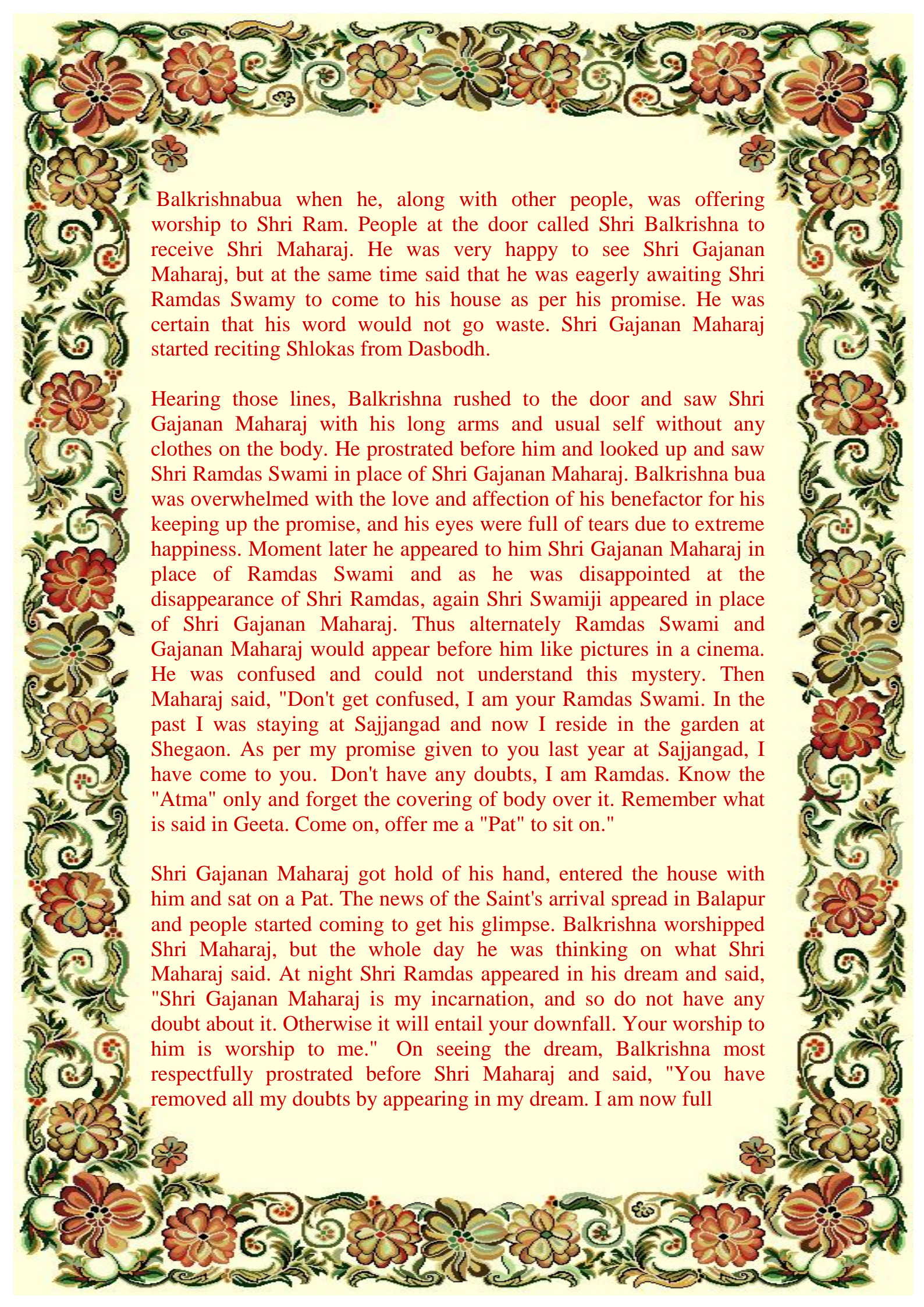
Now listen to another story of Balapur. Balkrishana of Balapur was a great devotee of Shri Ramdas Swami. His wife Putalabai was equally pious lady, and they both used to visit Sajjangad every year on foot. Their journey started in the month of Poush with a horse to carry their luggage and had three things with them, A Kubadi, small Dari and the sacred book of Dasbodh. His piousness was free of any ego. They accepted alms of food in the villages on way and the same food was offered to Shri Rama before eating. Every year he used to leave Balapur with his wife, on the 9th Vadya of 'Poush' month. On the way they continuously chanted the name of Rama and thus with Shri Ram nama on the lips they travelled via Shegaon, Khamgaon, Mehkar, Deulgaon Raja and Jalna, where they paid respects to Shri Anand Swami. Then from Jalna they went to Jamb, the birth place of Shri Ramdas Swami, where they used to stay for three days. From



there went to Divara, Bid, Mohari, Beleshwar and Domgaon, the place of Kalyan, the are devotee of Shri Ramdas Swami. Thereafter to Narsingpur, Pandharpur, Nate Pote, Shingnapur, Wai and Satara. Thus he used to reach Sajjangad on 1st Vadya of "Magh" month to attend the celebrations of Navami (Magh). As and offering to Shri Ramdas Swami, he used to feed Brahmins to the extent possible for him. He was a real Ramdasi, difficult to find like him, now-a-days. After the celebrations of Das Navami he used to return the same way he followed to going there. This routine continued for years still he became 60 years old.

On the eve of starting his return journey, he sat near the "Samadhi" of Shri Ramdas Swami with tears in his eyes, and with extreme grief said, "O all powerful Ramdas Swamy, O my teacher and guide. I have become old now and as such it will not be possible for me to come all this way hereafter or foot, and even journey by vehicle also appears difficult for me. I could follow this routine of Annual visit so far, but it may not be possible hereafter. You know that any sacred or devotional routine to be followed needs good health. Praying thus, Balkrishna went to sleep. In the dream he saw Shri Ramdas Swami saying to him, "Don't get so despaired. You need not come to Sajjangad hereafter. I am very much pleased by your devotion and so wish you to celebrate "Navami" at your home next year. I will come to you that time. This is my promise. Expenditure for the celebration of Navami should be within your means". Balkrishna was very happy over the dream. He returned to Balapur with his wife. Now listen to what happened next year at Balapur.

Balkrishna started the celebration of Ramdas Navami on the first day of Magh Vadya at Balapur. The daily routine was reading of Dasbodh in the daytime, and Kirtan at night. At noon he offered food to Brahmins and performed Arati in the evening. But all the while Balkrishna was eagerly waiting to see Shri Swamy to come as per his promise. The villagers contributed money for this celebration as requested by Balkrishana, and thus the "Utsava" continued for all the nine days at Balapur. And on the 9th day there was a surprise. At noon on that day Shri Gajanan Maharaj appeared at the door of



Balkrishna when he, along with other people, was offering worship to Shri Ram. People at the door called Shri Balkrishna to receive Shri Maharaj. He was very happy to see Shri Gajanan Maharaj, but at the same time said that he was eagerly awaiting Shri Ramdas Swamy to come to his house as per his promise. He was certain that his word would not go waste. Shri Gajanan Maharaj started reciting Shlokas from Dasbodh.

Hearing those lines, Balkrishna rushed to the door and saw Shri Gajanan Maharaj with his long arms and usual self without any clothes on the body. He prostrated before him and looked up and saw Shri Ramdas Swami in place of Shri Gajanan Maharaj. Balkrishna was overwhelmed with the love and affection of his benefactor for his keeping up the promise, and his eyes were full of tears due to extreme happiness. Moment later he appeared to him Shri Gajanan Maharaj in place of Ramdas Swami and as he was disappointed at the disappearance of Shri Ramdas, again Shri Swamiji appeared in place of Shri Gajanan Maharaj. Thus alternately Ramdas Swami and Gajanan Maharaj would appear before him like pictures in a cinema. He was confused and could not understand this mystery. Then Maharaj said, "Don't get confused, I am your Ramdas Swami. In the past I was staying at Sajjangad and now I reside in the garden at Shegaon. As per my promise given to you last year at Sajjangad, I have come to you. Don't have any doubts, I am Ramdas. Know the "Atma" only and forget the covering of body over it. Remember what is said in Geeta. Come on, offer me a "Pat" to sit on."

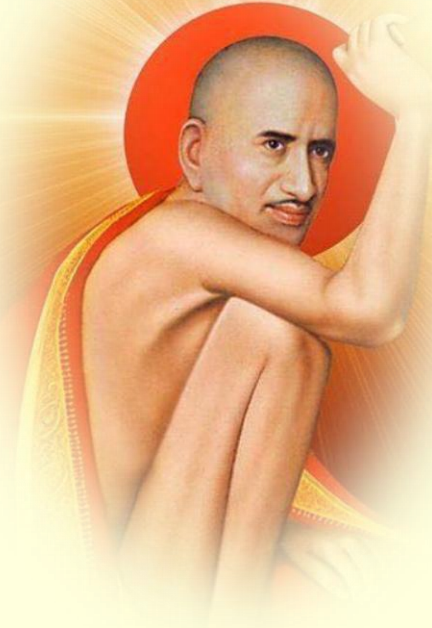
Shri Gajanan Maharaj got hold of his hand, entered the house with him and sat on a Pat. The news of the Saint's arrival spread in Balapur and people started coming to get his glimpse. Balkrishna worshipped Shri Maharaj, but the whole day he was thinking on what Shri Maharaj said. At night Shri Ramdas appeared in his dream and said, "Shri Gajanan Maharaj is my incarnation, and so do not have any doubt about it. Otherwise it will entail your downfall. Your worship to him is worship to me." On seeing the dream, Balkrishna most respectfully prostrated before Shri Maharaj and said, "You have removed all my doubts by appearing in my dream. I am now full

satisfied with the celebrations of Navami, and feel very much grateful to you. Now please do me a favor by staying with me for a few days." Thereupon Shri Maharaj promised to come again after some days and went away. He reached Shegaon in a moment and was not seen by anybody on the way.

May this "Gajanan Vijay" Granth bring happiness to all devotees. This is what Dasganu wishes. May good come to all.

"Shubham Bhavatu"
"Shri Hari Hararpanamastu"

Here is the End of Chapter Nine.



Compiled by : Shravan Pande, Shegaon, India.